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Statement of Veronica Vanterpool, Executive Director of Tri-State Transportation Campaign after the release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Tappan Zee Bridge replacement project.

Tri-State's initial analysis of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Tappan Zee Bridge replacement project indicates that the state has not yet made a firm commitment to transit. Although the state had previously asserted that the bridge would have rush-hour only bus lanes, even this modest step appears to be provisional as evidenced by language in the FEIS that states **“[t]he Replacement Bridge Alternative configuration could support the ability for express bus services to use the extra width on the bridge during peak hours. This use would have to be appropriately assessed and considered before being implemented.”**

The need for even this modest transit improvement is even more important in light of a statement made by state consultant Rob Conway admitting that the project “might not do anything in terms of congestion.” That is not the project the region wants, and it is not the project the region needs and deserves.

After months spent working with community members and elected officials to ensure transit's place in the project, Tri-State was disappointed to see that New York State did not heed the popular call for bus rapid transit (BRT). Governor Cuomo must firmly commit to the rush hour bus lane access his administration promised in June and further improvements to east-west bus transit in Westchester and Rockland Counties—improvements that will get people out of their cars and provide them a viable transit option that will spare them the burden of the bridge's proposed higher tolls.

Traffic-weary Lower Hudson Valley residents and elected officials have repeatedly called for bus rapid transit to be a part of the project, and state documents confirm that adding transit is the only way to reduce congestion in the I-287 corridor. Not doing so means that drivers, bus riders, and the region's economy will remain in gridlock for years to come.

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Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a non-profit organization working toward a more balanced, transit-friendly and equitable transportation system in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey